

## PATENT

REMARKSDISCUSSION OF CLAIMS

In the Final Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-12, 14, and 16-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 5,974,341 to Er et al.

In the Final Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-12, 14, and 16-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,073,049 to Alt et al.

In the Final Office Action, claims 3, 13, and 15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response thereto, claims 1, 5, 9, 16, 21 and 22 have been cancelled and claims 2-4, 6-8, 10, 12-15, 17, and 19 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-15, and 17-20 are now pending. Following is a discussion of the patentability of each of the pending claims.

Independent Claim 3

In the Office Action, claim 3 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, claim 3 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that amended claim 3 is in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims 2, 4, 10-12, 17, and 18

Claims 2, 4, 10-12, 17, and 18 depend from claim 3 and are similarly patentable. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are in condition for allowance.

Independent Claim 13

In the Office Action, claim 13 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the

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limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, claim 13 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that amended claim 13 is in condition for allowance.

Independent Claim 15

In the Office Action, claim 15 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, claim 15 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 5. It is respectfully submitted that amended claim 15 is in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims 6-8, 14, 19, and 20

Claims 6-8, 14, 19, and 20 depend from claim 15 and are similarly patentable. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above claim amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice of allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

7/22/04

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